

Spotlight

Thought leadership and policy

Sustainability: Where next?

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Statement of intent

A little over a year ago, Rishi Sunak's Conservative government delayed agreed deadlines for phasing out gas boilers and ending the sale of diesel and petrol cars. For many, it was seen as a symbol of retreat.

The new Labour government, far from perfect elsewhere, has already lifted the ban on onshore wind, halted new North Sea oil and gas licences, and set up the state-run investment company GB Energy. It trusts that these are seen as a statement of intent.

Now as Energy Secretary Ed Miliband prepares to head to Baku, Azerbaijan for Cop29 – the United Nations' latest climate change conference – he has an opportunity to restate the UK's willingness to play its part in tackling the climate crisis.

Depending on your point of view, hosting Cop29 in a petrostate that relies on fossil fuels for 90 per cent of its exports is either an admission of failure or an indicator of hard-headed pragmatism. The conference on the shores of the Caspian Sea is the second of three – the UAE hosted a year ago and Brazil will do so in 12 months' time – that will focus

minds on fossil-fuel use a quarter of the way through the 21st century.

The other key focus at Baku is finance. How will harms be compensated, mitigation funded, and adaptation (once a dirty word among climate activists) financed? Overleaf, we ask half a dozen interested experts what success might look like. Clarity is a theme that comes up again and again. One insider describes capital flows as "woefully inadequate", a view reflected by the Green Finance Institute (page 22) which argues that given the "quantum" leap required, it's up to the government to lay out long-term policy direction and spend public capital wisely to unlock private investment.

Carla Denyer, co-leader of the Green Party (page 10) is in no doubt that wealthy countries must use Cop29 to pledge monetary support ("We're talking *trillions*, not billions") to ensure those countries already experiencing climate-related impacts are not left behind.

Elsewhere, Emma Pinchbeck, the incoming chief executive of the Climate Change Committee, defends two visible and contentious symbols of environmental progress: pylons and wind turbines (page 18). "When I look at that infrastructure," she says, "I see protection. Not harm."

Coincidentally or otherwise, Pinchbeck starts her new job on 11 November, the opening day of Cop29. ●

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Spotlight

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How to make Cop29 a success

Amid international turbulence, how can the UK best use the conference?

From 11 November the world's climate delegates, diplomats and global leaders will assemble in Baku, Azerbaijan for the 29th UN conference of the parties. Cop29 will come after a change in government in the UK with a Labour Party pursuing its clean power 2030 mission. The Energy Secretary Ed Miliband, a Cop veteran, alongside David Lammy, the Foreign Secretary, has set out plans to create a new Clean Power Alliance. This is a group of countries all focused on accelerating the transition away from oil and gas and has been dubbed a "reverse Opec" by Labour insiders.

Cop29 is an opportunity, then, for the UK to reinstate itself as a global

climate leader. The government can use the conference to demonstrate its influence and encourage the decarbonisation journey of other nations by showcasing the launch of Great British Energy and its new clean power 2030 goal.

But it is also an opportunity to push harder for more details of how this transition will be financed globally. It ought to be a moment to set out the exact form of the Loss and Damage Fund, a question that has proved a central part of the negotiations at previous conferences.

So, when UK delegates arrive in Baku, what should they focus on to make Cop29 truly successful?



Sam Alvis

Director, energy and environment, Public First

Cop29 is an opportunity to promote UK influence abroad

Barack Obama's former foreign policy speechwriter Ben Rhodes often cites the moment in crafting the annual State of the Union speech where the president would need to shift from domestic issues to foreign policy. In eight years, he never managed much beyond, "We cannot separate our work here, from our work abroad." That truism, though trite, couldn't be more relevant for Ed Miliband's ambitions at Cop29.

Demonstrating the UK's success in decarbonising its economy is one of the most powerful motivators to the British public for climate action. It's a nice dose of patriotism that our country can achieve things and that we are "world-leading". That message also works well abroad. Labour's mission to decarbonise the power sector by 2030 isn't just about domestic energy prices and security. It's also about proving to other countries that carbonisation can be done, and that it can be electorally beneficial. The political rhetoric is that we can export technologies or expertise to developing countries – but as some developed countries waver on climate action, it's as important to export successful policy and politics to them. Ed Miliband is helped by Cops gradually becoming more tangible too. We will always have closed doors and technical negotiations. But, increasingly, Cops are moments to launch shared domestic pledges – on rolling out renewables, making electric vehicles accessible, or increasing energy efficiency. This is a Labour sweet spot.

As some developed countries waver on climate action, it's as important to export successful policies and politics, talking not just to Labour's domestic voters, but about them.



Lindsay Hooper

CEO, Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership
Businesses' engagement is key to Cop's success

In order to make Cop29 – as well as all future Cops – a success, we must tackle the complex dynamics of private-sector involvement head on.

While there are valid concerns about the influence of fossil fuel companies and the risk of diluting ambition, the failure of progressive businesses to engage could undermine progress on reshaping the economic systems and market structures that are necessary for real change.

The truth is, we need business and finance to be at the table – not to dictate terms, but to provide insight into the structural changes required and so that they can be held accountable for their role in the transition.

This approach mustn't start and stop at Cop. There is also a need post-Cop for effective private-sector engagement and support for national economic, industrial and innovation strategies and practical delivery plans, including long-term, clear and consistent incentives and support for private-sector transition.

This year's Cop, hosted in a fossil-fuel-dependent state, faces additional scrutiny. But rather than abandoning ambition, we should leverage it as an opportunity to engage those most impacted by the transition.

It's only by including all stakeholders – those driving change, those not yet engaged, and even those that are actively resistant to it – that we can build an equitable, effective pathway to a sustainable future for everyone.



Liam Hardy

Senior policy analyst, Green Alliance
The Clean Power Alliance must be centre stage

Cop29 offers an enormous opportunity for the new government to signal that the UK is back as a global climate leader. While climate finance will be the headline issue in Baku, the UK must also pair its international commitments with bold domestic action to truly lead on the world stage. This will be a chance for Keir Starmer to lay out an ambitious vision for key areas of UK climate policy.

Countries have to submit updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) ahead of next year's Cop30, and the UK should seize this moment to set a target for cutting carbon pollution by 2035. However, the immediate priority for the Prime Minister and his cabinet must be to devise a plan to actually deliver the UK's current NDC for 2030, to help meet the Paris Agreement goal of limiting temperature rises to 1.5°C. Even if the previous government delivered all its existing pledges and policies in full, it was not on track to deliver the UK's NDC. Another priority area for action is on methane emissions – one of the most potent greenhouse gases. At Cop26, the UK helped launch the Global Methane Pledge to cut global methane emissions by 30 per cent by 2030 from 2020 levels. However, since then, domestic action on methane has stalled. At Cop29, the UK can lead by setting a national methane reduction target of 42 per cent by 2030, which would be both achievable and world-leading.

And, while the government has one of the most ambitious clean power targets globally, hitting net zero by 2050 depends on securing access to critical raw materials. Cop29 must drive international cooperation to ensure fair, responsible access to these resources.



Harry Camilleri

Researcher, climate and geopolitics, E3G
Climate finance must be the UK's biggest priority

Cop29 will take place in difficult geopolitical circumstances, with the US election and ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East threatening to overshadow the talks.

Nevertheless, at Cop, leaders can help rebuild trust in the multilateral system by showing the 1.5°C target remains within reach.

The biggest negotiating priority is agreeing a new goal to mobilise climate finance at the necessary scale.

To be successful, the goal must include a significant increase in support for developing countries.

Ambitious governments can also show leadership by announcing new national climate plans, which will set emissions-reduction targets for 2035, ahead of next February's deadline – the countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

The NDCs must be economy-wide and embed pledges made by countries at Cop28 to triple global renewable energy deployment and double the annual rate of energy-efficiency improvements by 2030, while transitioning away from fossil fuels.

The current set of plans puts the world on track for 2.5-2.9°C of warming, so substantially strengthened targets are required to keep the 1.5°C goal alive. To support the countries most directly threatened by climate change, the Loss and Damage Fund, which was agreed at Cop27 and given more detail at Cop28, must be operationalised.

Vulnerable states should also receive assurance that the new finance goal will significantly increase the quality and quantity of funding for adaptation.

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Maya Singer Hobbs and Laura Chappell

Senior research fellow and associate director for international policy, IPPR
Success equals ambition at Cop29

Luckily, success for the government and success for the climate at Cop29 look remarkably similar. Success equals ambition.

The new government wants to be seen as an international climate leader. This means supporting ambitious outcomes at Cop29 – not least an ambitious commitment on climate finance to support developing nations in their climate action, known as the New Collective Quantified Goal.

This is a defining issue at Cop29 for most countries, and it must balance public investment and private mobilisation, as well as mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage – while also committing the world to meet the urgency needed on climate action with the sheer volume of funds.

Estimates suggest that \$1trn in external support may be needed annually by 2030. This is ten times the previous collective goal.

But Cop agreements are only part of Cop success. For the UK to be seen as a credible climate leader – and for Cops to shepherd transformative global climate action – they must be mirrored by ambitious domestic action.

The UK must continue to tell the world how it plans to reduce emissions rapidly and fairly at home; and of its commitment to support others.

It can point to its plans – via the Clean Power Alliance – to use domestic industrial policy to unlock action overseas – and it must have a story to tell on its aid budget which doesn't undermine UK leadership.

If ambition stays front and centre, success is possible.



Lindy Fursman

Director, climate and energy policy, at the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change
A successful conference must include progress on global carbon markets

At the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI) we work with political leaders in more than 40 countries around the world, helping many to address the challenges of climate change. We believe that the adoption of clean technologies, combined with the investment to facilitate their use, is key to the climate agenda.

Cop29 will include a focus on countries' new Nationally Determined Contributions for 2035.

While all countries must continue working to reduce their emissions, a key challenge lies in supporting the transition to cleaner energy systems in low- and middle-income countries.

Capital flows into climate action are still woefully inadequate, and the issue of finance to support the transition of emerging economies is particularly pressing.

A successful Cop will therefore include progress on climate finance and carbon markets, both of which we see as pivotal to supporting climate action globally. A key focus should be on how these can channel capital to the areas where it's needed most.

There are also huge opportunities to leverage technology, including to improve the transparency, efficiency, and security of climate investments and open new avenues, including in carbon markets, for increased climate financing. Although this will require strong and sustained leadership for Cop29 and beyond, these opportunities are key to accelerating progress and developing the solutions that deliver on the challenge ahead.



Ruth Townend

Senior research fellow, Environment and Society Centre, Chatham House
We must chart a viable path forward for developing fossil fuel producer countries

Taken together, Cop28, Cop29 and Cop30 represent a chance to reset lagging global climate action, amid the escalating impacts of climate change.

Under the leadership of a novel "troika" of the UAE, Azerbaijan and Brazil, these Cops can get to the heart of the matter – fossil fuels.

Between them, these troika countries make up the fourth-largest oil producer in the world.

For a successful Cop29, the current Cop president, Azerbaijan, must overcome its own reticence to tackle both energy-transition risk and climate vulnerability, leading other nations to do the same.

A viable path forward for developing-producer countries like Azerbaijan would change the game by raising the ceiling of ambition.

The Cop presidency must avoid distractions, including the customary flurry of new initiatives.

Money, instead, must do the talking, as the conference has a mandate to hash out a new, wide-ranging and sufficient climate finance goal to fund climate action in developing countries.

Achieving this could set funds flowing and speed countries on their way to ambitious new climate plans, urgently needed before Cop30, which will take place at the end of next year.

Bringing together the combined skill and will of the world, Cop29 must free up grinding gears in the Paris Agreement mechanism, which was signed almost a decade ago, and help secure a safer climate for us all. ●

“Why wouldn’t you?” Joining the charge towards net zero

Sir Dave Lewis on leading two pioneering clean energy businesses

In association with



The man who successfully led one of the biggest supermarkets back to market leadership is now spearheading the solution to an even bigger challenge: establishing Great Britain as a clean energy superpower.

Sir Dave Lewis is chair of two separate UK-based organisations that will both play a critical role in the government’s net zero plans: Xlinks and XLCC.

The first, Xlinks, is behind the Morocco-UK Power Project, which will supply millions of homes with renewable energy generated in North Africa and transported via 4,000km of subsea cables.

Reliable, affordable and clean power from the province of Tan-Tan in Morocco will be delivered exclusively to Great Britain via a dedicated intercontinental cable route, in a similar fashion to how the fibre-optic network wraps around the globe. Once complete, the project will be capable of providing 8 per cent of Great Britain’s current electricity needs.

Research by AFRY – a world-leading supplier of engineering, design and advisory services – shows it will significantly reduce, as well as stabilise, wholesale electricity prices, by reducing reliance on imported gas.

“Why wouldn’t you?” is Sir Dave’s simple answer when asked why he has involved himself with the project. “Yes, it could be seen as ambitious because of the scale, but the fact of the matter is, we are using tried-and-tested solar, wind, battery and high-voltage direct current (HVDC) cable technology to unleash a massive clean energy opportunity. It’s important to realise we aren’t dismissing the renewable sources available in the UK. Solar and wind generated here is exceptionally valuable.”

Sir Dave added: “However, the sun and wind in the UK is intermittent, with long periods – sometimes weeks at a time – when they generate almost no electricity. That’s why we must think ‘one world, one grid’ – the sun is always shining and wind is always blowing somewhere.”

The project is consistent with Morocco’s energy export strategy. Both the Moroccan government and King Mohammed VI recognise the value of the country’s wind and solar resources and have great ambition to export such renewable power to Europe.

Xlinks will also create thousands of

jobs in Morocco both during construction and once the project is in operation.

“Hence the generation site is based in Morocco: the country has twice the solar intensity of the UK and 20 per cent more than Spain, alongside consistent trade winds, which come up as the sun sets,” said Sir Dave. “Additionally, Morocco is already leading the world in renewable energy and the project builds on a trading relationship between Morocco and the UK that goes back centuries. We’re building on an incredibly strong foundation.

“The project is essential to Great Britain’s net zero transition – complementing UK-generated clean power – both in terms of the 2030 mission and beyond, with demand for electricity set to grow massively here and globally in the decade ahead.”

XLCC, a separate entity chaired by Sir Dave, is on a mission to combat the severe global – and worsening – shortage of HVDC cable, with the construction of the world’s largest HVDC cable factory at Hunterston, a former industrial heartland in Scotland.

Full planning permission has been granted, and XLCC is in talks with operators to connect offshore wind projects and enable vital network reinforcement. Its strategic plan is closely aligned with the government’s agenda.

It will drive better value into the supply chain; stimulate green industrial development; deliver around 900 highly skilled jobs; and attract significant private investment into the UK.

XLCC is also a potential supplier for the Morocco-UK Power Project. “There is a significant and increasing global supply bottleneck for HVDC cable, with demand expected to outstrip supply from next year,” said Sir Dave. “This is why XLCC is a critical enabler of the green energy transition, not just for Great Britain, but for the world.”

He added: “Such a bottleneck adds cost and time to the transition – this simply cannot continue, particularly as Great Britain’s electricity demand is predicted to increase by 20 per cent by 2030, and another 23 per cent by 2035... It is clear that net zero is not a static goal.”

This increase will be driven by electrification and fast-growing sectors like AI and EVs. The *Economist* predicts around 60 per cent of all vehicles will be electric by as soon as 2030.

And while many renewable projects face significant barriers in their delivery process around grid connections and investment, Xlinks’ Morocco-UK Power Project does not.

It has two connections in North Devon agreed with National Grid; the project brings a strike price of £70-£80 per MWh, bringing not just reliable, but

affordable clean power into the market; and best of all, it is market ready and requires no government investment.

Interest from across the industry has been plentiful. “The only way the UK can get to net zero emissions is to electrify as much as possible and to produce all our electricity in a zero-carbon fashion,” said Lord Adair Turner, chair of the Energy Transitions Commission. “Across the world, countries are thinking about the role of long-distance, high-capacity (HVDC) lines. Some of those will be within countries – like from the west of China over to the big sources of demand in the east. Some will be within the US, but some will be international.”

Lord Turner added: “The basic theme is that we will want to connect different parts of the world, different geographies, with HVDC lines – it’s something that is going to be a significant part of getting to net zero across the world, and Xlinks is one of the first projects pushing that as fast as possible.”

Xlinks, founded by Simon Morrish in 2019, has coalesced a world-class team that has a raft of experience delivering this kind of project, including Paddy Padmanathan (vice-chair, founder and CEO of ACWA Power), James Humfrey (CEO, Morocco-UK Power Project, ex-Shell and ADNOC) and Nigel Williams (project director, HVDC, ex-National Grid). Its board includes the great and the good from across the industry, such as Sir Ian Davis (Rolls-Royce, Johnson & Johnson, McKinsey) and Greg Jackson, CEO of Octopus, one of Xlinks’ investors. Other investors include TAQA, TotalEnergies, GE Vernova and AFC.

XLCC is headed up by an exceptionally experienced and specialist team, including CEO Ian Douglas. His extensive career includes a decade-long tenure as CEO of Global Marine Group and, alongside his leadership roles, he has served on the boards of multiple prominent companies in the subsea-cable and marine space, including CWind, HMN Tech, SB Submarine Systems and NTT World Engineering Marine.

With the desire to revolutionise the energy landscape, and leading the boards of two very able companies, it’s no wonder Sir Dave responds to any question over his involvement in the energy industry with: “Why wouldn’t you?” ●



Left to right: Simon Morrish, Paddy Padmanathan and Sir Dave Lewis

Carla Denyer's dilemma

The Green Party co-leader on parliament, GB Energy and her issue with Ed Miliband

By Harry Clarke-Ezzidio



After four months getting used to being an elected MP – give or take a few weeks of summer recess and party conference season – Carla Denyer, the co-leader of the Green Party, is still adjusting to the antiquated workings of parliament. Or, as House of Commons fanatics may term it, the “traditions” of the lower house.

“I’ve got no problem with tradition if it is bringing value or joy, or a sense of continuity, but where it is actively getting in the way of us doing democracy, well, I think we need to look at it again,” Denyer, the MP for Bristol Central, told me when I met her on a bright, mild October morning. Her office is located in parliament’s Richmond House, a Grade II-listed building constructed in the Eighties. Denyer’s space is a mix of the old parliament and new: my pine-green chair was missing an arm, while the room’s exposed Bourbon-biscuit



Carla Denyer has “concerns” about which projects Great British Energy will invest in

brickwork was accompanied by sleek black window fittings and a parliamentary assistant three weeks into her new role quietly typing away in the background.

Key among the Green politician’s gripes with Westminster – well-documented issues with heating, fire safety and vermin aside – are the prayers held at the beginning of each day of parliamentary business (“Not exactly fitting with our multi-faith society”), and the convoluted procedure of putting forward a private members’ bill (“You do that by signing your name in a book... and they draw little white balls out of a glass jar like in the Lottery”).

But the process of getting on a select committee, both for those covering specific bills and those that shadow government departments, is perhaps her most pertinent annoyance. On the former, Denyer had just received confirmation that she had secured

a place on the Renters’ Rights Bill Committee; the process was rather whimsical, she explained: “The way we do that is ‘fastest finger first’ on emails.” For the departmental committees, she added, Labour, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats are guaranteed a proportional number of seats on each, leaving one seat for the other parties to fight over through the “usual channels”.

Though final places had not been allocated when she spoke, Denyer said she was “hopeful” that at least one of the four Green MPs would be accepted on to a main select committee. “Especially as a smaller party, whether you get a place on a committee – and therefore the ability to take part in the detail of policymaking – seems to be as much to do with who and what you know, as well as fear and favour, as it is to do with proportionality.”

It speaks to a central question that overshadowed the initial delight of the

Green Party quadrupling its previous parliamentary representation in July: how much impact can four MPs *really* have on a policy area such as climate and sustainability? I put that question to Denyer.

“We’ve been very active,” she said, cutting a relaxed figure sitting crossed-legged on a dark green sofa. “We can ask the questions and put things on the agenda, and I do think that we will, over the next few years, be able to push the government to go further.”

She raises an example of Green influence outside of the traditional climate-and-sustainability axis: pressure on Chancellor Rachel Reeves to increase capital gains tax in the Budget. In their election manifesto, the Greens called for “radical” adjustments to taxes, including the raising of capital gains to be in line with income tax. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, Reeves didn’t quite go as far as Denyer’s party wanted, but capital gains tax rates did go up.

“While I’m definitely not claiming sole credit for that,” she said prior to the Budget, “[it’s] evidence that the Greens can push the Overton window,” referring to the range of policies which are deemed acceptable to the mainstream. “I would rather have Greens in government so that we were the ones delivering the policies ourselves... but in the meantime, supporting the Labour government in areas where I think they’re doing well, but pushing them to go further – that’s my job.”

Though it has been a stuttering start for the new government, if there is one area in which Labour can take credit, it is the swift action taken by the Department for Energy and Net Zero on green policy. Led by the Energy Secretary, Ed Miliband, Labour has lifted the effective ban on the construction of onshore wind farms (a David Cameron-era legacy); halted new North Sea oil and gas licences; launched a £7.3bn National Wealth Fund for green infrastructure; and set up the state-run investment company GB Energy.

“I’m really interested in what happens with Great British Energy,” Denyer said. “That’s a potentially good idea.” But she has misgivings, too, including about the ownership split between the government and private-sector investors. “What kind of projects is Great British Energy going to be investing in? If it ▶



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◀ ends up being mostly nuclear and carbon capture and storage, then I've got concerns." Two weeks prior to our conversation, Labour announced £22bn of public funding over 25 years for two carbon capture clusters, on Merseyside and Teesside. The government said the clusters would attract £8bn of private investment and directly create 4,000 jobs, and support 50,000 in the long term.

Denyer had praise for one of Labour's ambitions: to completely decarbonise the electricity grid by 2030 ("Yeah, that's our policy *too*"). "But actually, it's... heating and transport that are the trickier things to decarbonise," Denyer said. "I would like to hear more from the Labour government about how they're going to decarbonise transport, building, heating, energy efficiency and so on. The [annual] £28bn climate pledge that they rowed back on before the election – those cuts fell largely outside of electricity [decarbonisation projects], so my concern is they've cut the funding for that. We're not going to get to net zero without those areas, and government needs to focus on them."

In a recent interview with the *New Statesman*, Miliband said that his department's mantra was to "move fast and build things, rather than move fast and break things", in an inversion of the Silicon Valley cliché.

It was over GB Energy-backed plans to build a 114-mile electricity-pylon route partly through the East Anglian constituency of Adrian Ramsay, Denyer's fellow party leader, that Labour and the Greens clashed in the Commons. Ramsay backed his constituents' calls to consider "other options", such as costlier underground infrastructure. In a parliamentary debate that followed, Miliband said: "I would ask that the Green Party thinks about its commitment to tackling the climate crisis, which we all share, and then thinks about this question of infrastructure. If it wants to tackle the climate crisis, it should know that that simply will not happen if its leading members say no to new energy infrastructure."

Cameras caught Denyer, unable to formally respond to the political mic-drop moment, looking unimpressed. She remains so. Given the government promised to "not steamroller communities" (Denyer's words), Miliband was unfair in framing

Ramsay's concerns through a not-in-my-back-yard lens. Denyer believes Miliband's response was purely partisan.

"[In the] constituency neighbouring Adrian's, the Labour MP for South Norfolk has taken exactly the same position on this pylon route as Adrian, and yet, you haven't heard about this. You probably don't even know that MP's name." (Denyer is referring to the stance taken by Ben Goldsborough).

"And yet Ed Miliband certainly didn't get up at the despatch box and berate him publicly for taking the same position," Denyer added. She believes Miliband's defensiveness is a result of feeling "threatened by the growth of the Greens in the last election".

"I was a bit disappointed to hear him just reeling off the standard attack line he'd clearly been handed by the Labour Party press office," Denyer said while affirming her "respect" for Miliband. Earlier in our conversation, she said that she felt sorry for him: "He has the right ideas about what needs to happen, but is constrained by decisions being made in the Treasury and by the Prime Minister."

Prior to joining parliament, Denyer worked as a renewable energy engineer specialising in offshore and onshore wind. Spend time with her – we had previously spoken on the general election campaign trail back in July – and it won't take long for her knowledge about, and enthusiasm for, all things climate to become apparent.

As we discussed Cop29, to be held later this month in Azerbaijan, Denyer hopped off her sofa to show me research highlighting how money given in aid to the countries in the Global South is eclipsed by their collective debt

“Ed Miliband has the right ideas, but is constrained by Keir Starmer and the Treasury”

repayments. "In 2023, African countries spent over 50 times more on external debt than they received in aid from the UK," Denyer read from the screen. "If we're not helping them with debt – restructuring debts – then why are we bothering to give them aid?"

The Baku event has been dubbed the "finance Cop", and the Green co-leader believes wealthy countries must use it to pledge vast monetary support – "We're talking *trillions*, not billions" – to make sure that those living in countries already experiencing climate-related disasters are not left behind.

After the previous Conservative administration pushed back the introduction of carbon-reduction measures, Denyer expressed concerns about the UK government's legally binding responsibility to reach net zero emissions by 2050. Is Labour going in the right direction? While acknowledging that the government is doing a good job investing in renewables, Denyer added: "If you're allowing new fossil fuel projects to open at the same time, you're not going to get to net zero... Building more renewable projects and opening more oil and gas projects like Rosebank – an oil field off the Scottish coast set to open in 2026-27 – is like having a salad alongside your Big Mac and thinking that it's a healthy meal."

Though Denyer clearly has her sights set on Labour, what of the Greens? While her growing status has made her the subject of glowing profiles in the likes of *British Vogue*, *Elle* and *Cosmo*, a recent interview for another political weekly was less sympathetic.

It termed her "the most ignored woman in British politics", suggesting the Greens risk being dismissed as "a hard-left" protest vote.

"How can it broaden its appeal?" the subheadline asked. Denyer considered the question: "Well, the fact that in the election we got a record-breaking number of MPs elected – but also record-breaking vote share, number of second places [40], and number of deposits retained – shows that there is a huge potential for further growth.

"We're really grateful for the level of support we've received, and we will, as four MPs, try to turn that into action and pressure on the government. But this isn't a high watermark." ●

“Scotland can be a world leader in clean energy”

Public ownership, partnership and investment are key, writes Anas Sarwar

By Anas Sarwar

For longer than half a century Scotland’s natural resources have been central to the UK’s energy and its wider economy, from coal mines in communities across the country to the 1970s discovery of oil in the North Sea.

Today, as we face a global transition towards clean energy, the challenge for all political leaders is how to harness the potential of that transition. This is a pivotal moment for our country and our ambition must be to make Scotland a world leader in clean energy – unlocking the vast potential of our climate, geography and expertise, as well as our skilled workforce.

We are blessed with remarkable renewable energy resources – from onshore and offshore wind to tidal, hydroelectric and solar power. Yet, despite all this potential, Scotland has been held back by missed opportunities and a lack of strategic planning.

The SNP government once promised Scotland would become “the Saudi Arabia of renewables”, but instead, almost two decades later, Scotland has been left with an industrial desert. The transition offered by projects like ScotWind has been squandered, with the revenue generated used to fill budget gaps rather than invest in infrastructure.

At a time when other nations have surged ahead, investing in renewable industries and modernising their energy systems, Scotland has been left behind when it should have been leading.

Jobs have been lost or gone overseas, energy development has been stifled, and the number of active energy businesses in Scotland is now at a ten-year low. The consequence of 14 years of Conservative government has been stark – like the Tory government of the 1980s, it failed to support industries and stood by while our manufacturing base withered.

But SNP government failure and lack of vision over the past 17 years has also prevented Scotland from fully capitalising on our energy potential, leaving our people without a stake in the massive investments being made.

Last month, I had the privilege of travelling to Stuttgart to meet with EnBW – a clean technology company almost entirely owned by the state of Baden-Württemberg. The story of EnBW is not just a story of business success but one of social and environmental success, too.

While other nations have invested in the renewable energy space and been

dynamic and innovative in modernising their energy systems, Scotland has missed key opportunities.

That's why we need change and this is the moment we can start to realise our true potential. With the election of a UK Labour government, we are committed to resetting the relationships with Europe and other global partners, encouraging investment into Scotland and the UK.

But we need change in Scotland, too. Scotland must be seen as an attractive place to do business – welcoming investment with open arms, breaking down barriers to growth and providing the long-term certainty investors need. We need a Scottish Labour government that uses its strategic influence and convening power while partnering with businesses. We need to be deal-makers, breaking down obstacles and delivering the speed and certainty required for large-scale investment. We need government, businesses and communities working together to ensure Scotland flourishes.

While we will be campaigning for change in 2026, we are not wasting any time in ensuring a UK Labour government is also playing its full part. GB Energy, our publicly owned energy company headquartered in Aberdeen, represents a fundamental strategic shift in how we approach energy in the UK. For the first time, the government and people of Scotland will have a direct stake in our energy system.

This stake is critical: it means the government has skin in the game, ensuring long-term stability. It also means communities benefit directly. By giving local areas a stake in energy projects, we ensure not just more jobs, lower bills and energy security, but also returns that can be reinvested into vital local services, ensuring that no part of Scotland is left behind.

Partnerships will be at the heart of this transformation. We will work with businesses through co-investment models to attract and direct investment where it is most needed. This will not be about quick, easy wins – it's about planning for the medium and long term. Major job growth will come not just from building renewable energy projects but from creating and strengthening the supply chains that support them. Investments in infrastructure, like our ports, will be an early priority to position



The Scottish Labour leader, Anas Sarwar, with the party's candidates in Glasgow

Scotland as a global clean-energy hub.

And a Scottish Labour government, if elected in 2026, will ensure that we match our social policy outcomes with our economic and energy strategies. It is not enough to simply increase clean energy generation; we must take bold steps to reduce overall energy consumption across Scotland.

That's why housing will be a central pillar of our strategy. We need a large-scale programme of retrofitting existing homes to reduce energy usage, making heating them more efficient and affordable for families. At the same time, we will ensure that we have a major programme for new homes built to high environmental standards, cutting down energy use at the source and making homes fit for the future.

This approach is not limited to residential buildings. A Scottish Labour government will expand this vision to industrial sites, where we must make it financially viable for businesses to invest in energy-efficient infrastructure. We need to look at how we can provide the necessary support that incentivises companies to modernise their operations in ways that benefit the environment and also their own bottom line.

Scottish Labour will lead this transformation, ensuring that this comprehensive strategy results in shared

prosperity across Scotland. We will give communities and individuals a direct stake in the energy they produce, creating a system in which every Scot benefits from the natural resources we are blessed with. We will build an economy that is sustainable, fair and inclusive, planning not just for the immediate future but for the long term, where generations to come will inherit a greener, more prosperous nation.

Through long-term planning and forging partnerships with businesses, we will create a Scotland of opportunity. With Scottish Labour at the helm, we will ensure that the promise of clean energy brings real benefits to every part of the country, from reducing household bills to securing high-quality jobs in growing industries.

The Holyrood elections in 2026 represent a critical moment for Scotland. A Scottish Labour government is committed to delivering the vision of a fairer, brighter and greener Scotland – where everyone, from families to businesses, shares in the opportunities our renewable future offers. We will lead the way in creating a Scotland where no one is left behind and where the benefits of clean energy are felt by all. ●

Anas Sarwar is leader of the Scottish Labour Party and MSP for Glasgow

The road to clean power 2030

A clear, strategic approach is needed to turbocharge infrastructure delivery

By Tom Glover

In association with



The government's clean power by 2030 target – one of its five central missions – is incredibly ambitious. But as a “north star”, this mission can help accelerate investment and drive economic growth. Early signs from the first 100 days have been positive: overturning the ban on onshore wind, setting a record budget for the latest renewables auction, and confirming support for the first phase of carbon capture projects. But this must only be the start.

With 2030 in sight, we cannot lose momentum. Industry and government need to work in partnership. And as the UK's leading power generator and a leading renewables developer, RWE is well placed: we invested €3bn net in new green energy infrastructure projects in the UK between 2021 and 2023 and have ambitions to invest around €8bn net in the years 2024-30.

Through our investments, we already know the benefits that clean power can bring to towns and cities across Britain. Over 50 per cent of the investment in RWE's Sofia Offshore Wind Farm, now under construction in the North Sea, is within the UK, with the 108m blades being manufactured in Hull. This one project alone will support 8,800 jobs across the UK during development and construction.

Accelerating renewables deployment

Alongside bringing investment and jobs, offshore wind increases UK energy independence and helps billpayers by reducing exposure to volatile fossil fuel prices. Independent analysis by Aurora Energy Research shows that an electricity system dominated by offshore wind by 2035 is cheaper for billpayers than alternatives, with consumers potentially £68 a year better off in 2035 in an offshore-dominated system.

Now is the time to accelerate investment in renewables. To achieve this, we need a step change in deployment – however, in the most recent renewables auction, only around one third of the eligible new offshore projects were successful. It is therefore imperative that next year's auction maximises the available pipeline of projects, as well as offering value for money for billpayers.

Decarbonised flexible generation

Renewables such as wind and solar will play the central role in meeting

clean power by 2030. However, firm, flexible capacity will continue to be necessary to balance the grid and ensure security of supply.

Through our fleet of gas-fired power stations, we already play a crucial role in providing this flexibility and security. To meet our goal to be carbon neutral by 2040, RWE is exploring using carbon capture and storage (CCS) and hydrogen combustion to reduce the emissions from our power stations. In the UK, we are actively developing four CCS projects, which altogether could produce enough flexible, low-carbon electricity to meet the peak winter demand of up to 5 million households.

However, it will not be possible to deploy these at scale before 2030. Therefore at least in the near-term, “unabated” gas will continue to play a critical role in terms of security of supply. Our analysis suggests that, assuming the government’s stretching renewable targets are met, installed firm, flexible capacity could be roughly the same in 2030 as today (around 30-35GW) of which the majority remains unabated gas, but running far fewer hours of the year, comprising just 5 per cent of generation, compared with 35 per cent in 2023.

The government recently reaffirmed its commitment to developing CCS

With 2030 in sight we cannot lose momentum

by pledging £21.7bn of funding, over 25 years, to the first tranche of projects and their associated carbon stores in the north-west and Teesside and Humber.

This is a welcome step forward in providing a clear signal to industry, recognising how CCS can decarbonise our industrial heartlands and protect energy security.

But we need continued support. It is essential that the forthcoming Spending Review commits to funding the next phases of projects and stores. The government must also provide a framework to enable non-pipeline transportation of carbon via shipping. As well as playing a major role in our domestic decarbonisation efforts in the UK, carbon shipping presents a significant international trade and export opportunity. The UK’s geography means that we are uniquely well placed – utilising existing expertise

on the UK continental shelf and decades of oil and gas experience in the North Sea.

Working in partnership – from spreadsheet to delivery

In developing a challenging yet credible pathway to 2030, it is important that government works in partnership with industry to take ambition from “the spreadsheet” to “delivery”.

We welcomed the establishment of “Mission Control” as a “one-stop shop” to troubleshoot and clear the way for energy projects. To ensure the pathway is actually deliverable, government must consult closely and in detail with industry experts who are currently tasked with developing and deploying the critical projects required for 2030.

Without consented projects, we cannot drive growth. The government’s focus on breaking down planning barriers is therefore welcome.

However, at RWE we understand that consent cannot be at the expense of public support. It is important that developers continue to consult with local communities in a way that is both meaningful and conveys the benefits that investment and infrastructure can bring to host communities.

Facilitating a comprehensive industrial strategy

It is clear the government wants to play a constructive, strategic role in the economy, and it will shortly set out its approach in the forthcoming Industrial Strategy. This will also include new institutions such as the National Wealth Fund (NWF) and Great British Energy.

There is certainly a role for an entity like the NWF in facilitating long-term investment in strategic assets, such as ports, to ensure the UK can deliver on its clean energy goals.

Furthermore, GB Energy could have a role in unlocking critical investment, but it must not simply “crowd out” the private sector. Clarity is needed on GB Energy’s mandate to ensure that this is the case. In summary – a positive start has been made by the new government. But with the countdown to 2030 now on, there must be a relentless focus on delivery, with the public and private sector working hand-in-hand to drive investment and economic growth. ●

Tom Glover is UK country chair at RWE



The transition to clean power 2030 needs investment across the energy industry

“When I see pylons, I see protection. Not harm”

Emma Pinchbeck
on clean power
2030 and the art
of the possible

By Megan Kenyon

Emma Pinchbeck's recent appointment as chief executive of the Climate Change Committee was for some time the energy sector's worst kept secret. Following Chris Stark's departure from the role in April, Pinchbeck's was the name most mentioned as his likely heir. As the chief executive of the industry body, Energy UK, Pinchbeck has proved a prominent expert on the transition to clean power and how to make a renewables-based future a reality.

In her new role, which officially begins on 11 November, she will be in charge of providing the government with a clear, independent critique of progress towards net zero. And now Labour is in charge, Pinchbeck's new role will include scrutinising the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)'s work on its mission to achieve clean power by 2030. Essentially, she will be marking the homework of Stark, who is now head of mission control for clean power.

On this ambitious mission, it's clear that DESNZ, led by Ed Miliband, has hit the ground running. Within 72 hours of Labour's election win, the department had already lifted the ban on onshore wind, and it launched GB Energy shortly after. But with six years to go until the 2030 deadline, is this impressive goal actually achievable?

“I hate the ‘is it achievable’ question,” Pinchbeck told me at the end of July, still speaking in her capacity as chief executive of Energy UK. “We think it will be very challenging, but 2035 was challenging,” she said, “and there's not a huge difference between 2030 and 2035. The industry that I look after is committed to decarbonising the power sector in the 2030s.”

DESNZ has already announced a £1.5bn boost for renewable projects as part of the most recent contracts-for-difference auction, and unveiled a new partnership with the Crown Estate in tandem with the launch of GB Energy. Still, its plans for decarbonising home heating and reducing the UK's reliance on natural gas remain less clear. But Pinchbeck is unfazed. “People regularly remind me of things that I've said probably weren't possible, that turned out to be possible,” she said. “When I was working on the coal phase-out at World Wildlife Fund [WWF], we were worried that the lights wouldn't be able to stay on.” At the end of September, the UK

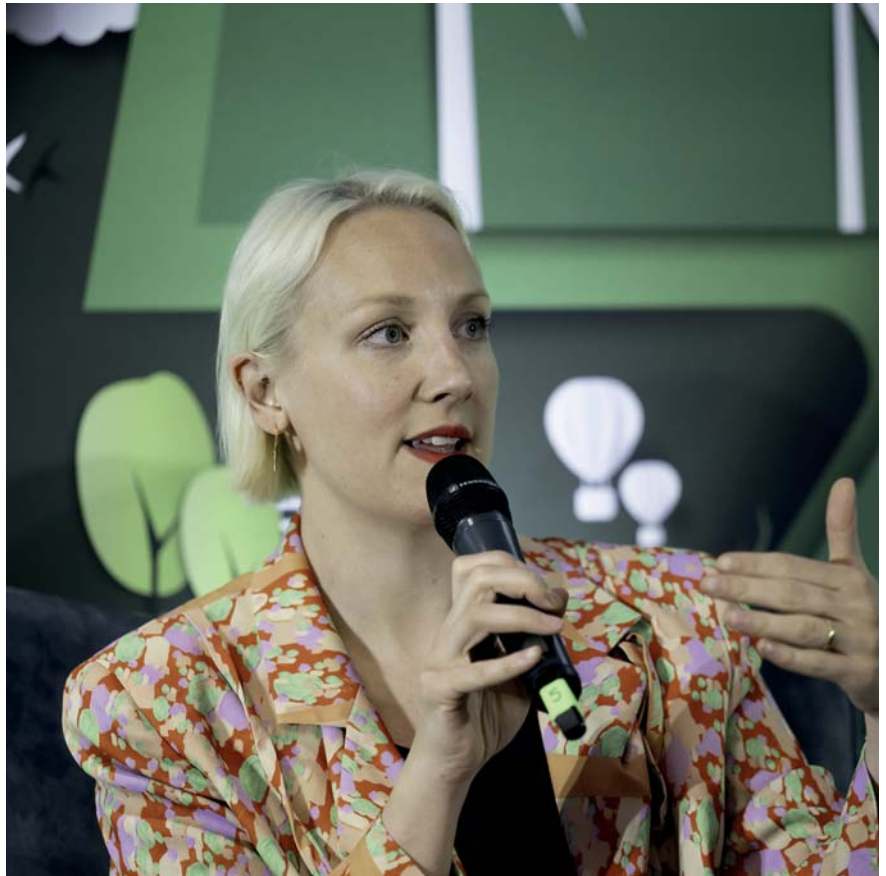
switched off its final coal power station at Ratcliffe-on-Sea: the lights stayed on. “The system continues to surprise us because of innovation at every stage,” she added.

One thing Pinchbeck is clear the government will need to crack to make clean power 2030 a success, however, is flexible generation. In layman’s terms, this is the method through which the power network remains fully functional during the phase-out of fossil fuels, and in light of the changeability of renewable energy. “Renewables are variable. It’s not a surprise that the wind doesn’t blow all the time, and the sun doesn’t always shine,” Pinchbeck explained. “The technology is becoming more efficient... but if you’re managing the electricity grid you need a predictable output.”

The CCC’s sixth carbon budget – a report by the committee that advises the government on how much carbon can be emitted between 2033-2037 to remain in line with net zero targets – assumes the UK will have gas-fired power stations that switch on once or twice every few years to manage unpredictable weather conditions. Non-emergency power generation could come from batteries, or by encouraging more consumers to use electric vehicles or heat pumps.

Pinchbeck pointed out that there are ways in which the system can counter the emissions from natural gas such as “decarbonised gas” or the deployment of carbon capture and storage. “The technologies are at a very early stage,” Pinchbeck said, “but it’s this little bit that we’d really like to see some thinking on.” The government is clearly on the same wavelength. In October, Keir Starmer, Rachel Reeves and Miliband travelled to the north-west to announce a £22bn investment over the next 25 years in new carbon capture clusters across Teesside and Merseyside. The trio claimed the investment would “reignite our industrial heartlands” and “kickstart growth”.

Pinchbeck, 37, lives in the Cotswolds with her family. She cut her teeth as head of climate change at WWF UK before serving as deputy chief executive of another trade body, Renewables UK. She joined Energy UK in July 2020. Shortly after her announcement as the new head of the CCC, she received a raft of criticism on the online platform X from anti-pylon campaigners, who criticised her approach to energy



Emma Pinchbeck is the new chief executive of the Climate Change Committee

infrastructure. Speaking to me in July, Pinchbeck addressed opposition to pylons head on. “I live in an area of outstanding natural beauty. There are wind turbines on the hill that I can see from my house. You can also actually see some transmission pylons,” she said. “I do what I do for a living because I am an environmentalist and I care about climate change. But when I look at that infrastructure, I see protection. Not harm.” This tension is one that the government will likely need to combat. Reeves has often floated the idea of “community benefits” for areas where pylons and other critical infrastructure is built. But detail of these has remained thin.

“There is a blunt conversation which needs to be had with people about the impacts of climate change on the places they love, and the reason we’re building this stuff,” Pinchbeck said. She added: “It can’t be OK for some communities to say they don’t want change at the expense of the national economy, especially when people are struggling with their energy bills.” Pinchbeck caveated that, of course: “Industry should be required to do as

little harm as possible.” She explained that a way of bringing communities along in terms of benefits could be to “invest in the local community” or to mirror existing schemes in which communities that host infrastructure are offered reduced energy bills.

Though she is clearly on board with the government’s agenda and intention, Pinchbeck was clear there is room for improvement. “I would like to see a lot more focus on the electrification of heat,” she said. “It reduces our dependence on imported gas, which is important for everyone’s bills.” She also pointed out the government needs to accelerate planning reform in order to speed up the electrification of home heating. “We need to make it easier for people to get a heat pump in their house without having to tick so many boxes,” she said.

With expertise gained from four years at Energy UK and many more working in the renewables sector, Pinchbeck will likely be adept at holding the government to account on reaching clean power 2030. Her expertise and scrutiny could prove essential in ensuring the government actually achieves its goal. ●

Can green energy solutions deliver for nature and people?

Let's work together to set clear industry standards

By Benj Sykes

In association with



The climate and biodiversity crises are two urgent and deeply interconnected challenges that need to be met swiftly and on a global scale.

As one of the world's leading renewable energy companies, at Ørsted we believe that renewable energy is at the intersection of these challenges.

If done right, the energy transition offers unique potential to be a force for good on both fronts – but it must be built responsibly and sustainably. It's imperative that our green energy solutions contribute to both ecosystem health and deliver positive community benefits – and that we can measure those impacts.

We're working to create a global biodiversity measurement framework, develop pilot projects that can be scaled worldwide, and invest in strategic innovations to mitigate potential impacts.

But we can't do it alone. We're advocating to set clear industry standards for what good looks like. We're eager to collaborate with the new UK government, environmental agencies, NGOs and local communities to create a world that runs entirely on green energy – and has a lasting positive impact on nature and people.

That's why we're working with leading actors through global forums like Cop16, the most recent UN convening on Biodiversity, to advocate for policy coherence and to show what the renewable energy sector can do for climate, nature and people.

Building in biodiversity

Restoring biodiversity is one of the most powerful tools we have to fight climate change, after moving to a world free from fossil fuels. Healthy habitats can mitigate climate change and help adapt to its effects.

As the global leader in offshore wind with nearly ten gigawatts of installed capacity and over 30 years of experience, we've made tackling the climate crisis our core business.

But we want our renewable energy solutions to do more than generate clean, affordable, secure green energy. We've set an ambition that all new renewable energy assets we commission from 2030 onwards should have a net-positive biodiversity impact. This means that we'll not only avoid, minimise and compensate for any impact on nature

during the lifetime of our projects – we'll also actively help restore and enhance ecosystems.

Developing an impact-measurement framework

Since making that pledge, we've been developing methods to make good on our promise. We're creating frameworks and metrics so that we can measure our actions on the ground and develop ways to deliver progress on a global scale.

We don't have all the answers, but we are committed to finding lasting, scalable, sustainable solutions – and collaboration with local partners, governments and NGOs is key.

We're working with the Biodiversity Consultancy to develop an impact-measurement framework for meaningfully and consistently measuring and reporting biodiversity impacts across projects and markets.

The framework founded in established scientific methodologies is being applied by industry to renewable energy assets on and offshore for the first time.

For Ørsted, this framework builds on the robust environmental measurement and monitoring we already do wherever we operate, to sustainably develop renewable energy projects. It will allow us to measure, track and report delivery of our net-positive 2030 ambition for our projects across the globe and build on the programme of pilot projects we've already launched.

Wilder Humber

One exciting project we are currently collaborating on with local experts here in the UK is our Wilder Humber initiative to restore coastal ecosystems in the Humber Estuary.

The Humber Estuary is one of the most important natural features in the UK – especially for the birds and other wildlife that depend on it. But decades of pollution and commercial development have resulted in the severe decline of precious habitats and species, such as sand dunes, salt marsh, seagrass and native oysters.

We've teamed up locally with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust to deliver an ecosystem-level programme including restoration of seagrass and saltmarsh and the introduction of half a million native oysters to improve the health and



Ørsted is working on seagrass restoration with its Wilder Humber initiative

resilience of the estuary's ecosystem.

It's one of many pilot projects we're working on around the globe to help inform what methods we can scale in a wide range of ecosystems to deliver on our 2030 ambition and support long-term benefits to nature.

We're also testing out innovative ways to support warm water coral reefs with our ReCoral project in Taiwan. And we're exploring the potential of marine rewilding in the Netherlands with our partners ARK Nature.

These projects demonstrate the huge range of ideas we're going to need to explore as offshore wind accelerates globally into new ecosystems and communities.

Leading the way from the UK

The UK has established itself as a world leader in offshore wind. Other markets look to the UK as a template for how things should be done – not just in terms of scale and cost, but also for how to

build offshore wind the right way.

We have always had a strong focus on building projects sensitively and sustainably. We've had to innovate and work closely with other partners, NGOs, scientists, academics and industries to find solutions to some very complex challenges. Working collaboratively together, we can achieve more – faster.

We are working with the new UK government to achieve our net-positive biodiversity goals and find solutions that can work for the whole renewable energy sector. We need government collaboration to set targets, create frameworks and establish regulations that are aligned with our voluntary ambitions.

All eyes are on nations like the UK to champion solutions for nature.

Together, we can deliver green energy and long-lasting benefits for nature and people. ●

Benj Sykes is Ørsted UK country manager



Dr Rhian-Mari Thomas
CEO of the Green Finance
Institute, chair of the National
Wealth Fund Taskforce

“Who should fund the green transition? The simple answer is the private sector”

As the world edges closer to climate tipping points, the urgency for robust, sustainable financing models is undeniable. With the UK aiming for net zero by 2050, the scale of investment needed is vast. The Climate Change Committee estimates that reaching our target will require £50bn a year by 2030. Governments alone cannot bear this cost, nor should they. Instead, the private sector must play a pivotal role in this historic transition. But how do we ensure capital flows into the right areas of the green economy?

There are two crucial ways to encourage private investment in the green transition. First, we must clearly define what we mean by the transition and, where necessary, regulate markets to ensure capital flows effectively. Investors need certainty that their capital is aligned with net-zero goals. Last month's Transition Finance Market Review (TFMR) serves as an essential sense check, offering insights into both policy and market activity to date. It highlights the importance of establishing a well-defined framework

for transition finance, which helps investors and regulators alike understand what counts as green and what counts as transitional.

The second way to boost private investment is by ensuring that there are sufficient, attractive opportunities for investors to commit capital. We cannot regulate our way to net zero; real investment opportunities must be created in sectors crucial to the transition. The TFMR recognises the need for sectoral investment pathways. Some sectors that are central to the green economy, such as hydrogen, carbon capture and storage, or advanced recycling, are not yet mature or fully investable. Without targeted efforts to develop these sectors, we risk missing critical opportunities to reduce emissions.

This raises the important question of who should fund the green transition. The simple answer is the private sector, given the quantum of capital required and the government's limited fiscal headroom. Yet, the government still has a crucial role to play.

There are three key ways it can support the mobilisation of private finance.

One, defining transition. Clear definitions of transition sectors and activities, backed by strong regulatory frameworks, will give private investors the confidence that they are supporting legitimate, impactful projects. Clarity here will help prevent greenwashing while ensuring that capital flows into the right areas of the economy.

Two, long-term policy direction. Investors need to know that the government's commitment to the green transition is serious and long-term. Setting clear, consistent policies around key sectors will help foster the confidence necessary for long-term green investment.

Three, public capital deployment. Public capital can be deployed smartly to share risks with private capital. This can unlock investment in emerging sectors by signalling alignment with industrial strategy. For example, if public funds are invested in a nascent technology, private investors will see this as a vote of confidence, accelerating further investment. The National Wealth Fund should be assessed against these outcomes.

Our approach must be mirrored internationally. We cannot expect to deploy capital globally through agreements at Cop alone. Instead, we must focus on creating a pipeline of investable opportunities in developing markets. New institutions can play a critical role by developing projects, deploying public capital and fostering the right policy environment to reassure global investors.

The good news is surely that to deliver the transition, both here and globally, we have all of the tools. We just need to find a way to coordinate them better. The UK is now in a position to demonstrate how to effectively finance net zero here, create sustainable jobs and resilient communities, restore our leadership position on climate and deliver a new approach in international climate finance that moves from commitments to real investment. ●

Comment



Mete Coban
Deputy mayor of London for
environment and energy

“The goal is not just net zero by 2030 – it’s a net zero that uplifts everyone”

Mete Coban became the deputy mayor of London for environment and energy in July 2024. He is responsible for overseeing London Mayor Sadiq Khan’s climate action plans. Coban was previously a councillor and cabinet member at Hackney Council. He is also the founder of the youth-led charity My Life My Say.

It is a privilege to have been appointed London’s deputy mayor for environment and energy, working alongside Mayor Sadiq Khan, a leader who not only shares my passion for climate action but also believes in building a greener city for all Londoners.

Climate action is at the heart of our vision for a fairer, safer and greener London. But it’s about more than just the environment: it’s about social, racial and economic justice, too. From clean air to green jobs and lower energy bills, we have an opportunity to deliver real benefits

to our communities, especially those who have been historically left behind.

Too often, the voices of young people and global majority groups, as well as working-class Londoners have been excluded from shaping the future of our city. I know this as someone who grew up feeling unheard and under-represented. I made it my mission to give people like me a voice.

Londoners from all backgrounds deserve to be at the centre of shaping climate action. Our transition to a greener future is not something we’ll impose on communities: rather it’s something we’ll build with them, hand in hand.

Whether it’s cutting energy bills or transforming schools into net zero spaces that invest more in teachers and less in utility bills, we’re committed to ensuring that everyone benefits – starting with those who need it the most. We look forward to achieving more in this space by working hand in hand with the new government which shares our ambitions.

One of my key priorities will be ensuring that London’s green economy thrives in a way that brings high-quality jobs to the people and places that have been overlooked. It’s about creating opportunity, not only for future generations but for those living and working here today.

The green transition can and must be a source of hope and growth, particularly for communities that have often been excluded from these conversations.

London’s rivers, parks and green spaces are for all of us and that’s why we’re committed to restoring our waterways – like the Thames, the Wandle, the Lea and others – and ensuring they are clean, safe, and open for all. This isn’t just about the environment. It’s about reclaiming these spaces for Londoners who have been disconnected from nature for too long.

The Mayor and I are committed to a socially just approach to environmental policy, ensuring that no community is left behind in our push for a greener London. We will work with London’s boroughs, social housing tenants and local groups to lead the way on retrofitting homes, cleaning our rivers and creating new green spaces, driven by the voices of those who often feel that environmental issues don’t speak to their needs or experiences.

Our green London will be created by all Londoners – young and old, from every corner of our city, and from every background. With the collective energy and determination of this great city, I am confident that we will not only reach our goal of net zero by 2030, but do so in a way that uplifts everyone. ●

BOOSTING CONSUMER CONFIDENCE AND DELIVERING LOWER BILLS



MIMA's vision is for everyone, in every part of the country, to have a home which is low energy, low carbon, healthy, comfortable, and safe. Insulation, and especially non-combustible mineral wool insulation, is key to achieving this.

- Yet there are still over 19 million homes in England alone with an EPC rating of below C.
- Nearly half of walls have not been insulated (with only 10% of solid walls upgraded) and almost half of those living in fuel poverty are in homes without cavity walls i.e., predominantly solid wall.
- More than 60% do not have the full complement of loft insulation set by building regulations or have no insulation.

Driving insulation upgrades has been and must remain a staple of energy policy, whatever heating system is being used, as the benefits are evident.

1 Insulation Benefits the Consumer:

- Well-insulated homes keep energy bills down, alleviate fuel poverty, and help create healthier, more comfortable living conditions.
- Well-insulated homes protect from future energy price shocks, reduces the country's energy consumption and electricity grid reinforcement costs, and cuts emissions in the buildings sector.

2 Insulation Protects the Consumer:

- Insulating to reduce the amount of heat a home needs has become even more important as the UK transitions to the use of heat pumps and other systems which use high-cost electricity for heating.
- Insulating to lower a home's energy use, de-risks the process for consumers when energy prices are relatively stable, and even more so should unit prices sky-rocket again.

3 Insulation Supports the Grid:

- Insulation has a crucial role in reducing overall energy demand and relieving pressure on the grid.
- The National Grid 'Future Energy Scenarios' envisages around a one-third reduction in residential heating demand by 2050 through insulation.

Let's improve people's lives and transform the UK's building stock together.

MIMA, alongside its supply chain partners such as the Energy Efficiency Infrastructure Group (EEIG), offers our genuine support to and partnership with the new Government in the development of a 10-year initial package of powerful policy commitments and incentives to ensure swift delivery of the Warm Homes Plan.

Scan the QR code to find out how MIMA aspires to help every type of household and building owner, in every part of the country with five low cost, 'quick wins' to get home upgrades moving and keep bills low:

